

DOE TEC Routing Topic Group Conference Call
Thursday, January 18, 2007 12:30 p.m.-1:45 p.m. EST

Conference Call Minutes

Chair: Jay Jones (RW)

Participants: Cloyce Brackett (SSEB), Kevin Blackwell (DOT/FRA), Barbara Byron (CA Energy Commission), Kurt Colborn (MHF), Sandy Covi (UP), Pat Edwards (CSG/NE), Ray English (NNPP), Scott Field (WIEB), Dan Fisher (Public Utilities Commission of Ohio), Floyd Gilzow (CSG/MW), Aubrey Godwin (ARRA), Ralph Hail (Norfolk Southern), Bob Halstead (Nevada Agency For Nuclear Projects), Lisa Janairo (CSG-MW), Paul Johnson (ORNL), Candice Jordan (ECA), Marsha Keister (INL), Sean Kice (SSEB), Steve Maheras (Battelle), Mel Massaro (DOT/FRA), Ed Mueller (Esmeralda County, Nevada), Christina Nelson (NCSL), Doug Osborn (SNL), Cort Richardson (CSG-NE), Larry Stern (CVSA), Elgan Usrey (SSEB), Chris Wells (SSEB), Sarah Wochos (CSG/MW)
Contractor Support: Ralph Best (BSC), Randy Coppage (BAH), Michele Enders (SAIC), Lee Finewood (BAH), Julie Offner (BAH)

Summary:

The conference call began at 12:30 p.m. eastern standard time on Thursday, January 18, 2007. Before this call, four items were sent via e-mail to the topic group for review:

1. A definition of a “suite of routes”
2. Revised task plan for the topic group
3. Description of activities for the topic group
4. Draft agenda for the TEC meeting in Atlanta

Jay asked for comments on these items. The intent of the call was to finalize the agenda for the topic group meeting at TEC.

Items Discussed:

Task Plan:

Jay received comments from several topic group members. Based on these comments, there will not be four subgroups. Instead, the entire topic group will focus on criteria and route identification. Analytical tools and data are now combined into one subgroup. Some of the intermediate dates have been left blank for certain tasks. The end product date for route identification is still December 2007.

TRAGIS/RADTRAN Workshop:

Bob Halstead asked about specific dates for the March 2007 TRAGIS/RADTRAN workshop. Bob noted there are several conflicts with the March timeframe. NRC is having a conference in the middle of March. Easter and Passover holidays are around that same timeframe. Jay responded that having this workshop is valuable and will allow topic group members to go through real time exercises. The dates proposed are March 13 through March 15 based on Paul Johnson and Ruth Weiner being available for the workshop. Bob stated that these dates directly

conflict with the NRC conference which starts on March 14. Jay has a draft agenda for the workshop and will try to send it out to the topic group before the TEC meeting in Atlanta. If not then, Jay will have the draft agenda at TEC for the topic group to review.

Sarah Wochos asked Jay to briefly review what the workshop agenda covers so members can determine whether they should attend. Jay stated that this is not the same workshop as two years ago. Ralph Best commented that this is not a training workshop but is a workshop to focus on a table top routing exercise. The workshop is intended to address and discuss issues such as what is meant by criteria, what is a suite of routes, and how are routes looked at differently from the group standpoint as opposed to how the tools are used.

Bob Halstead stated that another issue to consider about the workshop is whether it is premature to have this workshop at this time. This issue was originally addressed by Bob Fronczak in an e-mail. Bob Fronczak stated in his e-mail that developing and selecting criteria would impact the routing process. Bob Halstead stated that there is still debate as to whether this workshop should take place. Cort Richardson commented whether this routing process can happen in a purely linear fashion. If this is the approach then Cort stated it is more feasible to look at the routes earlier in the process and the workshop should take place. According to the task plan, Scott Field commented that there are five items to complete between now and the workshop which may not be enough time to complete these tasks. Sarah commented that this table top exercise could be part of the TEC meeting in Atlanta. Jay agreed to discuss the workshop viability at TEC and select a time. Jay also offered to consider having the workshop at the next TEC meeting in Kansas City. Sarah mentioned there are possibilities for virtual meetings to take place in order get some of the preliminary work done before the workshop.

Jay asked Paul Johnson if it is feasible to have a net meeting for TRAGIS. Paul confirmed it was possible. However, a net meeting would not replace the workshop.

Bob Halstead stated that Nevada is not against the workshop in Oak Ridge. Bob commented that having the meeting in Oak Ridge could allow Fred Dilger from Black Mountain Research to come and show some GIS and other routing tools his company has developed for Nevada and California. Bob also mentioned that having an actual workshop might make it easier to allow the railroads to participate in the routing process. Bob also commented that there seems to be a mindset there are a lot more routes and operational flexibility than currently exists. Bob stated that the topic group should not be wasting time and energy dealing with the population avoidance issue. The topic group would benefit from having a discussion of rail routing with the railroads. Jay stated that DOE had a meeting with the railroads two years ago in August 2005 where TRAGIS runs from multiple origin sites were shown to representatives from the different railroad companies. Feedback was received from the railroads on these different runs. A summary of the meeting was sent to the state regional groups and will be sent to the routing topic group members.

Jay stated that DOE is trying to have a collaborative effort with all the different stakeholders. There are railroad representatives on the topic group. Sandy Covi stated that information has been shared over the past ten years at various meetings and with numerous state personnel. Jay will set some time aside at TEC to have the railroads give their input. Jay stated that the final decision for route selection will be with DOE and the railroads.

Bob asked that a decision not be made about the workshop until the entire topic group discusses the need, time and place for the TRAGIS/RADTRAN workshop. Jay responded that no decision about the workshop will be made until after the topic group has had a chance to discuss it at TEC.

Definition of a Suite of Routes:

Bob asked Jay if it is now department policy that DOE is not going to use this process to have a preferred rail route between each rail shipping site and the repository. Jay responded that DOE will have a suite of routes but the topic group will not be focusing on reactor origin. Bob stated that it seems the approach is to have a suite of routes that will be used to narrow down to a primary route and a backup route. Ralph Best stated that the routes in the EIS were neither primary or secondary but representative routes used for analysis purposes only. Bob stated that when those routes were discussed around the country and at state meetings that was not what was communicated by DOE. Bob suggested that DOE provide more clarification in writing on why DOE is choosing a suite of routes. Scott Field stated that the stakeholders are being asked to identify a suite of routes but no one is sure what the suite is going to be used for. Scott further commented that there is a difference between choosing a suite of routes that will be used to select a primary route/alternate routes, and choosing a suite of routes in which all the routes are weighted equally for shipment.

Ralph asked the topic group members how does the end use of the suite of routes affect the selection of the suite of routes. Scott Field expressed frustration at having to ask the same question of what the suite of routes means and still not getting an answer. Jay stated this is an evolutionary process. Looking at the FRR shipments, the process involved having three routes and one route was selected prior to a shipment. Jay stated the process that DOE is going to use is: there are several routes and when it comes to actual shipment then a route is selected. If this is accurate, Scott requested that DOE put this process in writing. Jay stated that he will try to provide more clarification pertaining to the suite of routes in writing before or at the TEC meeting.

Bob Halstead stated that Union Pacific has identified a route from Kansas City to the Caliente spur. This is the type of information that the topic group needs before spending hours thinking there are more acceptable routes and developing criteria on routes that will never be used. Bob requested his e-mail be included in the conference call minutes. Bob stated that he is more concerned about the logistic options and that there are people in the department who are proposing the traveler train contract. Bob commented that the first five years of operation will be different than the life of the operation. Bob suggested that there be a focus on the routes that railroads are likely to use for the last two-thirds of the haul to Yucca Mountain.

Jay stated that in an earlier task plan there was a bulleted item to meet with the railroads. Jay stated that he will look into possibly setting up another meeting with the railroads.

TEC Meeting:

At the TEC meeting in Atlanta, Jay would like to have Paul and Ruth give a preview at what they would do at the workshop. Paul stated he is putting together a small presentation of one reactor with eight different routes to show what information is available with TRAGIS. For example,

information such as the amount of rail line shared with commuter and coal trains, the amount of the routes which do not have signals on the line, and the amount of single versus double track line are some of the capabilities of TRAGIS.

Bob asked Paul if the tunnel and bridge data will be in the model. Paul replied he has one database with bridge and tunnel information. Kevin Blackwell stated that FRA has already addressed the issues of single/dual track in a tunnel and the procedures for trains if one train is carrying hazardous material on a single/dual track through a tunnel. Bob stated there are issues in the West with single tracks through a tunnel.

Ruth will do a RADTRAN analysis. Doug Osborn stated that he and Ruth will show the incident free dose state by state in the rural, urban, and suburban population zones, as well as dose risk societal ingestion risk and consequence analysis for a small city, medium city, and small town along one of the routes. If there is enough time, a sensitivity analysis on one of the routes looking at one of the variants of curie loading within each of the casks will also be shown to the topic group.

Sarah suggested that the topic group talk about the previous shipping campaigns before the criteria and the TRAGIS/RADTRAN workshop are discussed. Ray English will have some slides addressing the naval shipping campaigns.

In the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking from DOT, Jay mentioned there is a list of factors/criteria to consider for routing.

December 19 Teleconference Call minutes:

Cort brought up Lisa's e-mail addressing the December 19 teleconference meeting minutes. Cort was unsure if the issue is that the minutes are incomplete or if there is some sort of censorship taking place.

Jay asked Michele if corrections to the minutes are made if a topic group requests that the minutes reflect the discussion more accurately. The procedure is to make corrections per DOE's direction. The teleconference meeting minutes are posted on the TEC website but the last two conference call meeting minutes have not been posted for the Routing Topic Group.

Bob Halstead stated that Nevada's comments were reflected adequately. Bob suggested that if members have specific comments they want in the minutes they should send their comments in an e-mail.

Tribes and Local Government Involvement:

Bob Halstead stated that DOE needs to solicit more involvement by the Tribes and local government. Tribes in Nevada are waiting to see when the Draft Rail Alignment EIS comes out so they can determine what positions they are going to take in regards to the Mina route. Indian tribes along the cross country routes need to be involved. Bob is concerned that the Tribes will negate earlier work accomplished on routing because they were not involved in the process from the beginning. Jay responded that he has made extensive efforts to appeal to the tribes to participate in this process.

Action Items:

1. Jay will send the draft agenda for the routing workshop to the topic group or will have it for the TEC meeting.
2. Jay will send out a list of criteria based on other shipping campaigns before TEC.
3. The meeting minutes for this call will be sent out before TEC.